

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 147

50th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2012

Tracking Number: .188618.1

Short Title: Doña Ana County Educational Initiative

Sponsor(s): Representative Andrew “Andy” Nuñez and Others

Analyst: James Ball

Date: January 29, 2012

Bill Summary:

HB 147 makes an appropriation to implement a county regional educational initiative in Doña Ana County.

Fiscal Impact:

\$100,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the regents of New Mexico State University (NMSU) for Doña Ana Community College (DACC) in FY 13. Unexpended or unencumbered funds revert to the General Fund.

Fiscal Issues:

According to the Higher Education Department (HED), this request was not submitted by NMSU to HED for review. HED has established a formal process for reviewing earmarked budget requests for higher education institutions. This process requires prior approval by the governing body of a university or college. It also provides for analysis of each request by HED, the Department of Finance and Administration, and the Legislative Finance Committee. HED recommends that requests that circumvent the formal review process not receive funding in the annual budget but be resubmitted for funding in FY14.

Substantive Issues:

HED states that, according to NMSU, the appropriation will be used by DACC to support the Regional Educational Initiative (REI), also known as the Bridge Program. The Bridge Program is an educational initiative driven by the local business community to develop the local work force and reduce the high school dropout rate. The specific purpose of the appropriation is to continue the work of REI and the Bridge Program to build a stronger economic future for Doña Ana County. Funds will be used to continue the existing programs that concentrate on helping students understand the connection between education and future earnings, increase the supply of a quality work force, increase graduation rates, increase attainment of education, and increase the percentage of employers involved in internships, co-ops, and education-to-employer work programs.

Background:

HED's analysis of HB 147 indicates that REI was a result of a task force commissioned in 2007 to develop solutions and recommendations to prepare all Doña Ana graduating high school students to compete in the global work force. The group has been instrumental in its leadership and guidance of community discussions regarding school attendance rates and the preparation of a well-qualified work force in order to develop a stronger economic future for Doña Ana County. REI has created collaborations between public and private sectors including businesses, nonprofits, and both secondary and postsecondary educational institutions to support educational excellence and optimize the county's work force.

Related Bills:

*SB 186 *ENMU Career Technical Student Programs*